

have increased relative to those of part-time employees.” More troubling is that 31 percent of respondents believe they will have more part-time workers 2 years from now.

There is bipartisan support for repealing this provision. This bill has 34 cosponsors—mostly Republicans, including every Republican member of this committee—but Senator DONNELLY and Senator MANCHIN of West Virginia, also a Democrat, support it.

Republicans have talked a lot about wanting to repair the damage of Obamacare. We have also talked about wanting to get results.

This bipartisan bill should be an important step to doing both.

In fact, this reminds me of why so many of us like being on this committee—because the issues we work on affect so many Americans.

When we talk about fixing No Child Left Behind, we’re talking about 50 million children in 100,000 public schools.

When we talk about making it simpler to apply for a Pell Grant to go to college, we’re talking about simplifying a form that 20 million families fill out each year.

When we talk about modernizing the Food and Drug Administration and making it easier for Americans to access lifesaving drugs, we’re talking about something that affects nearly every American.

But today we are focused on 2.6 million Americans who are mostly low-income and at risk of losing jobs and hours.

I look forward to hearing what our witnesses have to say.

#### TRIBUTE TO COMMEMORATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE RELEASE OF THE IRAN HOSTAGES

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate in the RECORD the anniversary of the release of the Iran hostages on this date in 1981.

Soon the Senate will be consumed by a great debate regarding the proper strategic approach our Nation must take to ensure that Iran does not develop a nuclear weapons capability. Tomorrow, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will hear testimony from both State Department and the U.S. Treasury about the current state of play in negotiations with Iran. Next week, the Senate Banking Committee is meeting to consider perspectives on the strategic necessity of Iran sanctions that will further the debate. I, for one, welcome that important discussion, although I recognize that some of my colleagues hold views that are different from my own on how best to contain Iran.

There is, however, yet another important policy matter related to Iran that not only deserves but also demands the unified, bipartisan support of every Senator. Thirty-four years ago today, January 20, 1981, 52 of our fellow American citizens returned home after a harrowing 444-day ordeal of being illegally held hostage in Iran. We sent these diplomats, Foreign Service personnel, along with officers and enlisted members of our Armed Forces, to Iran in service to our Nation as they were seeking only to strengthen ties between our two countries. There was even an American businessman involved. Nevertheless, they all paid dearly for this service by being forced

to endure humiliating treatment, brutal interrogations, mental and physical torture, and even mock firing squad executions while their families suffered endless waiting and genuine fear of their loved ones’ imminent demise.

Although their return was a joyous occasion for our entire Nation and we celebrated as one people honoring our heroes, those 444 days took a toll not only on the hostages but also on their family members—a toll that continues for many to this day. Unfortunately, we failed to recognize both the long-term impact their incarceration experience and ill treatment would have on many of them and the support they would need. In many instances, the results have been tragic. Among the former hostages and their families, there have been suicides, advanced PTSD-type depression, divorces, alcoholism, and drug dependency. Unfortunately, Phil Ward, a communications officer from Virginia who committed suicide in the fall of 2012, was one who never fully recovered from the cruelty of those events.

We must help to ease this burden and provide these brave Americans with the same measure of justice and healing our courts have already awarded to other hostage victims and their families. While the Algiers Accords, the document which secured the release, bars the former hostages and their families from legal action against Iran for the brutality they endured, to this day they remain not only the first victims of modern hostage-taking but the only Americans barred from seeking justice from Iran. The former hostages and their families have already waited more than three decades to experience the full support of the government they so heroically served and to see some accountability by their captors. Therefore, I will soon introduce legislation to compensate the hostages and their families by assessing penalties on those who continue to do business with Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions policy. This legislation, however, represents but one solution to an issue that is three decades overdue. Another or perhaps an additional option would be to strongly recommend that as a condition of the ongoing nuclear negotiations, such compensation come directly from “frozen” assets that for more than a year now have been released to Iran at the rate of \$700 million a month.

Accordingly, I look forward to righting this injustice by working with any or all of my colleagues as we stand united in support of the former hostages and their families.

#### PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN’S VOLLEYBALL

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Penn State University Nittany Lions Women’s Volleyball program for winning the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association, NCAA Championship.

Led by four returning starters and legendary coach Russ Rose, the Penn State University Nittany Lions concluded the 2014 season by defeating the Brigham Young University Cougars in straight sets to win the NCAA Championship. The Nittany Lions finished with a record of 36 wins and only 3 losses.

With the 2014 championship, the Nittany Lions have claimed six of the last eight NCAA Championships and seven overall in women’s volleyball, setting the record for the most women’s volleyball championships by a single program in history.

The 2014 Nittany Lions Women’s Volleyball team brought together a group of student-athletes who excelled both on the court and in the classroom. For their efforts on the court, four Nittany Lions were selected to the AVCA Division I All-America team, with Senior Micha Hancock earning both First-Team All-American honors and becoming the fourth Nittany Lion in program history to earn AVCA DI National Player of the Year honors.

Special congratulations go to Junior Megan Courtney who was selected as the 2014 NCAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player and to Freshman Ali Frantti, who earned AVCA DI National Freshman of the Year honors.

Not to be outdone in the classroom, six Nittany Lions earned spots on the Fall Academic All-Big Ten list for their academic performances this season.

Today I want to recognize the significant contributions that the Penn State University Women’s Volleyball team has made to collegiate athletics and to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with Coach Russ Rose at the helm. I wish them all the best as they continue to lead by example for student-athletes everywhere and set the stage for the program’s continued success into the future.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today the United States ranks 12th in the world in the percentage of 25-34 year olds achieving post-high school degrees. We need to make changes that help keep students engaged in their futures while also ensuring our educational programs are adequately preparing students for the jobs of the 21st century.

Career and technical education, CTE, programs are proven to help keep students more engaged in the classroom and less likely to drop out of high school, and to help meet the needs of high-growth, skill-intensive industries looking for the next generation of workers. The U.S. Department of Education announced that the average U.S. high school graduation rate is 80 percent, while the graduation rate for students in CTE concentrations is higher than 90 percent. 81 percent of high school dropouts say real-world learning opportunities would have kept them in school.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act is a major source of Federal support for the development